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Department of Health and Family Services


DIVISION OF DISABILITY AND ELDER SERVICES


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To: Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) Directors
County Mental Health Coordinators in ADRC Counties
County AODA Coordinators in ADRC Counties
Human Services Directors in ADRC Counties

From:  Joyce Allen, Director
Bureau of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services

 Donna McDowell, Director
Bureau of Aging & Disability Resources

Re: How Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRC) Will Serve Individuals with Mental Health or Substance Abuse Issues

In April 2005, The Wisconsin Council of Long Term Care (LTC) Reform issued its final report on the expansion of Aging and Disability Resources Centers from the original pilots to the rest of the state. This workgroup advised the Department on realistic strategies for developing a statewide system of Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs) that are highly visible and trusted sources of information about prevention strategies, community resources and long-term support options for people, and that serve as the single entry point to publicly-funded LTC programs. The mission of the ADRCs is to provide excellent service to people who are elderly or have a disability, and their families, whether they have resources to purchase their own services or need help doing so. This report recommended that ADRC's serve the following populations: people who are elderly, physically disabled, developmentally disabled, and those with mental health and substance abuse issues.

The following counties have operating ADRCs that, for the past six years, have been serving adults who are elderly, physically disabled and developmentally disabled under the Family Care statutory authority and funding: Fond du Lac, LaCrosse, Milwaukee, Portage, Richland, Jackson, Kenosha, Trempealeau, and Marathon. While the primary focus of ADRCs has been on individuals with long-term care needs, many individuals seeking help from ADRCs have also had mental health and substance abuse issues. In 2005, funding was competitively awarded to 13 counties to operate 9 new ADRC's. Those 13 counties were: Brown, Barron, Green, Forest, Manitowoc, Sheboygan, Calumet, Outagamie, Waupaca, Green Lake, Marquette, Waushara, and Wood.

It is now the expectation, specified in all ADRC contracts, that within a maximum of three years all of the ADRC's, new and ongoing, will provide to the mental health and substance abuse populations the following Core Services: Information & Assistance, Disability Benefits Counseling, and Emergency Response. Outreach and publicity materials should draw attention to ADRC services to person with mental illness and substance abuse problems. The ADRCs are required to serve at least the elderly and one other adult population in the first year of operation, and serve all target groups by the third year of

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operation. The ADRCs may, but are not required to, provide other ADRC services to people with mental illness and substance abuse disorders and administer the MH/AODA Functional Screen. Presently, a county probably would have to redeploy resources from within its human services system to add additional ADRC services for mental health and substance abuse, such as the MH/AODA screen, as ADRCs are not yet funded to do so.

ADRC responsiveness and service to those with mental health and substance abuse issues will be a tremendous benefit to your county. The contract between the Department of Health and Family Services and the ADRCs will ensure that mental health and substance abuse consumers will be able to access the ADRCs for information and assistance on such topics as housing, employment, transportation, and nutrition to name a few. The ADRCs will maintain a resource data base with information on programs and services available to its target populations. The Disability Benefits Specialists (DBS) will be able to provide accurate and current information on a comprehensive array of private and government benefits and help consumers to access these benefits. They will provide information, advice, and assistance on consumer rights, complaint, grievance, and appeals processes. In addition, the DBS can be useful assisting with volunteer training and technical assistance for self and family advocacy. Adding more expertise to the ADRC in the areas of mental health and substance abuse will also benefit those consumers in the other populations who have such issues.

In order to effectively develop these services for the mental health and substance abuse populations within the ADRCs, it is imperative that county long-term support, aging, developmental disability, economic support and human service agencies collaborate in this expansion. ADRC staff will contact coordinators of mental health and substance abuse services to initiate discussion on approaches to service delivery in the near future, if that has not already occurred. ADRCs need collaboration from all partners to serve the public well.

The Bureau of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services would like to assist the local collaborating agencies to develop the models for serving adults with mental health and substance abuse issues. Bureau staff is available to provide technical assistance, such as training on recovery principles, basic information on the mental health and substance abuse populations including diagnosis, treatment, and co-occurring issues, and information on statewide treatment options and resources. The Bureau is willing to participate in the local collaborative planning efforts to establish how the mental health and substance abuse populations can be best served by your ADRC.

If your county is interested in such assistance please contact Alice Mirk at (608) 261-8878 or email at mirka@dhfs.state.wi.us or Jennifer Peters at (608) 261-9312 or email at peterjc1@dhfs.state.wi.us. We look forward to hearing from you and working with you on this very important project.

Cc: Area Administrators
County Aging Units in ADRC Counties
County Long Term Support Units in ADRC Counties
Judith Frye
John Easterday
Sinikka Santala